WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. OF L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
HEADQUARTERS
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DECISION REVERSED IN HATTERS' CASE

United States Circuit Court of Appeals Reverses Decision Rendered Against United Hatters.

TRIAL JUDGE IS CRITICISED

Judge Lacombe Writes Opinion, Which Is Concurred in by Judges Cox and Noyes.

Washington, April 15.--The U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals, Second Circuit, sitting in New York City, handed down a decision on Monday, April 10th, reversing the judgment of the lower court in the Danbury Hatters' case, in which a verdict was returned against the Hatters in the sum of $232,240.12. The original case was started over seven years ago resulting from a strike which was called in the Loewe Factory, July 25, 1902, 240 employes ceasing work. Suit was brought by Loewe and Company August 31, 1903 under the provisions of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law, $80,000 damages were alleged, and threefold damages under that law claimed. The Hatters' attorneys claimed that the Hatters' union and other unions were not engaged in trade or commerce, and therefore did not come under the operations of the Sherman Anti-Trust law. Relying upon these points the Hatters made no defense upon the bill of complaint. Federal Judge Platt of the Federal Circuit Court of Connecticut maintained this poistion and dismissed the complaint. Loewe, or rather the Anti-Boycott Association, appealed to the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals, and both parties agreed that that court should certify the case and ask the question of the U. S. Supreme Court as to whether a suit of the kind could be maintained under the provisions of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law. February 3, 1908, the United States Supreme Court decided that the case could be maintained. The case was tried before Judge Platt and a jury, which lasted over four months. Judge Platt instructed the jury that they must find for Loewe and Company and left to the jury the question of how much damage Loewe and Company showed they sustained. The jury as stated awarded $232,240.12.

Since the starting of the suit in 1902 and the beginning of the trial, 26 of the 240 defendants died. Attachments were issued against the homes and savings of 100 of the defendants. The Anti-Boycott Association and the Manufacturers' Association stood behind Loewe and

Company. The American Federation of Labor aided in the legal presentation of the case, and in addition gave its moral support to the Hatters. With this verdict against the Hatters, the A. F. of L. appealed the case for the Hatters to the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and retained Judge Alton B. Parker, Hon. Frank L. Mulholland, of Toledo, Ohio, and Judge John K. Beach, of New Haven, Connecticut. A magnificent brief and masterful arguments were made to the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals and the unanimous decision of the court reverses the judgment and remands the case for a new trial. The latest information is that Loewe and Company (the American Anti-Boycott Association) will appeal from this reversal to the United States Supreme Court.

RUBBER WORKERS ORGANIZING

All Workers in Rubber are Requested to Keep Away from Akron, Ohio.

Washington, April 15.—A campaign of organization is on among the rubber workers at Akron, Ohio, Owing to the fact that the Operators of the factories manufacturing rubber goods in Akron are violently opposed to an organization of their employes, organization work must of necessity be done quietly. It is desired by the central body of Akron that rubber workers in various parts of the country be advised to refrain from coming to that city during the progress of organization.

A full crew bill on trains has been adopted by the Washington state legislature and signed by the governor.

Minneapolis Hodcarriers have just gained a good increase in wages and bettered conditions.

The Mayor of Boston has addressed a letter to the head of every city department inaugurating the Saturday half holiday without reduction in pay. Where this particular half holiday conflicts with the public business another day is to be selected.

The Teamsters employed by the St. Louis, Mo. Transfer Company have secured an advance in wages.

Electrical Workers of Indianapolis, Ind. have been granted an increase of 2½ cents per hour.

Painters of Indianapolis, Ind. have just secured an agreement for two years, carrying an increase for the present year and an added increase next year.

The Printers on the Fort Worth newspapers have gained an increase in wages ranging from 48 to 92 cents per hour.

Omaha Painters have just secured another increase in wages, bringing their scale up to 50 cents per hour.

SCOTTISH INNOVATION.

Trade Union Congress, Meeting at Kilmarnock, Discusses Issuance of Charters.

Washington, April 15.--Last year the Scottish Trade Union Congress, convening at Kilmarnock, had under consideration the adoption of the American plan of issuing charters. To those unfamiliar with foreign labor movements it is necessary to state that the issuance of charters is not common. Every trade unionist here is fully acquainted with the issuance of charters, but in foreign countries this custom does not generally prevail. The congress the year before had directed that a thorough investigation be made of the subject of issuing charters, and the General Secretary had an extensive correspondence with the American Federation of Labor Office thereon. The advantages were set forth, forms and sample copies were transmitted, and the entire subject discussed at the Kilmarnock congress. The congress, in the following language by resolution, authorized the issuance of charters:

"That, with a view of preserving the bona fide character of trade unions and preventing overlapping and other conditions detrimental to the principles and progress of the trade union movement, this congress authorizes the parliamentary committee to prepare (and issue and present to next congress) a charter to be given only to such trades councils and trade unions as are approved."

SWAMPED WITH MAIL.

Answers to Senator La Follette's Circular to the Railway Mail Clerks Immense in Number.

Washington, April 15.--Although but a short time has elapsed since Senator La Follettee sent out his letter of inquiry to the railway mail clerks answers are coming in at the rate of several hundred a day. The senator's offer to assist them if furnished the information necessary has struck a responsive chord. The matter affects these clerks' right to organize.

If answers continue to arrive at the present rate a very large percent of these employes will emphasize the opinion heretofore held that if given an opportunity 90 percent of them would seek membership in the American Federation of Labor. The government officials are beginning to realize now that they have attempted a difficult task in their effort to deprive workmen the right to associate themselves together for the purpose of improving their conditions.

Pathetic letters have been constantly coming into the headquarters of the American Federation of Labor reciting acts of intimidation, coercion and other forms of tyranny on the part of superintendents and other officials of the railway mail service. Many men have been laid off, victimized and otherwise mistreated. Definite action will be inaugurated within a short time to get the whole matter before the extra session of congress.

Los Angeles unionists will hold a monster parade and mass meeting on April 15. Arrangements are now in progress to make the occasion the largest eight-hour demonstration ever held in Southern California.

LABOR COMMITTEE COMPLETE

Republican Minority Selects Its Members and Committee Is Now Ready for Work.

Washington, April 15.--The assignment of republican members to the various committees of the House of Representatives has been completed, and it is now possible to make public the personnel of all standing committees. The Labor Committee, in which the labor movement is intensely interested, is composed of the following representatives:

William B. Wilson of Pennsylvania, (Coal Miner, Dem.), Chairman.
Walter L. Hensley of Missouri (Dem.)
James P. Maher of New York, (Hatter, Dem.)
Arthur B. Rouse of Kentucky, (Dem.)
David J. Lewis of Maryland (Coal Miner, Dem.)
William Schley Howard of Georgia (Dem.)
Frank Buchanan of Illinois, (Iron Worker, Dem.)
Finly H. Gray of Indiana, (Dem.)
John J. Gardner of New Jersey, (Rep.)
Edward B. Vreeland of New York, (Rep.)
E. H. Madison of Kansas, (Rep.)
Willis C. Hawley of Oregon, (Rep.)
John M. C. Smith of Michigan, (Rep.)

Holyoke, Mass., Tailors, with the assistance of Organizer Tazelaar of the American Federation of Labor, and Organizer Pascale of the Tailors, have secured a substantial increase in wages and bettered conditions after a four days' strike.

In Wellesley, Mass., the men employed by the city have been granted 25 cents per day increase in wages.

The Carpenters, Painters and Teamsters of Galesburg, Ill., gained an increase in wages on the first of the present month without friction.

Painters in Knoxville, Tenn., have just won an advance in wages and secured an agreement calling for the union shop.

Minneapolis, Minn., Hod Carriers secured an increased wage and improved conditions recently.

Preparations for Memorial Sunday, second Sunday in May, are under way in a large number of towns and cities where central bodies are located. Each succeeding year greater attention is being given to Labor's Memorial day.

The Amalgamated Carpenters of Washington, D. C., secured an increase of 6 cents per hour and Saturday half holiday.

The Plate Engravers in the Geodetic Survey Department at Washington, D. C., get increase of 12½ percent to take effect July 1, 1911. They are members of a local union holding charter from the A. F. of L.

DEMAND INCREASED WAGE.

Federal Employes Receive Active Assistance of Citizens of the District.

Washington, April 15.--Plans have been matured whereby organized and systematic effort will be made to increase the wages of the employes of the various departments of the government. No change has taken place in the amount of compensation for many years, and with the increased cost of living an actual reduction in wages has been effected. Owing to the stringent regulations put into operation by a former administration and continued by the present, the employes themselves are prohibited from making an effort to readjust their wages to conform to their actual necessities.

The effort now being made will undoubtedly result in the final rescinding of the obnoxious rule prohibiting federal employes from organizing, thus opening the way whereby they will be free to exercise their own methods in securing increased wages and improved conditions.

INTERESTING CONFERENCE.

Labor Members of Congress Meet at American Federation Headquarters.

Washington, April 15.--Nearly all the card members of congress responded to an invitation to meet in conference at American Federation of Labor headquarters shortly after the convening of the extra session of congress. The conference was informal and a general discussion of matters affecting labor were discussed. Several congressmen, not members of the labor group, but whose loyalty has been proven, were also present.

All legislation which has been before congress relating to labor was discussed, and in addition some attention was devoted to old age pensions, workingmen's compensation and nullification of laws by the courts.

Congressman W. B. Wilson (coal miner) has given much attention and study to a statute for old age pensions. It must be borne in mind that under the constitution as at present framed a law of this character would not stand the test of the courts. Then the next step would necessarily be the amendment of the constitution, but this is such a tremendous task that it is problematical whether that could be accomplished at all or not for the purpose desired. In view of these obstacles another plan has been evolved, which, in the light of statutes already in operation, appears to give hope of accomplishing tangible results. The details of the undertaking are numerous and cannot be taken up and fully explained and comprehended until several points at issue are reconciled.

There is a disposition among many members in congress, in addition to the labor group, to enact a law taking away the assumed right of courts from declaring acts of congress unconstitutional.

Congerences of labor members have been held frequently since their first entrance into congress in 1906, and the practice is to be continued.

GOOD FOR VERMONT

Some Splendid Labor Legislation.

Washington, April 15.--That the trade unionists of the country are becoming alive to the influence which they can assert along legislative lines is illustrated by the accomplishments of the Vermont State branch of the American Federation of Labor. It is not an easy task to initiate new legislation into the legislatures of the older and more "sedate" states, for countries long settled do not change in opinions or methods rapidly. The officials of the state branch therefore are entitled to much credit for the excellent results accomplished during the last session of the Vermont legislature. The sum total gained can best be told in the language of our informant, secretary of the state organization, Alexander Ironside:

"As a result of organized effort there was enacted an employers' liability bill, voluntary compensation plan on lines adopted in New York State; a valuable amendment to the child labor law, making it the best law in New England; a bill to amend the state constitution, giving the legal voters the right to say whether compulsory compensation should be legalized. We were also successful in defeating a bill designed to establish compulsory arbitration. We are well pleased with the fruits of the session."

WASHINGTON SCORES

The Northwest Trades Unionists Get Substantial Laws Enacted in Cause of Humanity.

Washington, D. C., April 15.--Information has just reached the headquarters of the American Federation of the details in reference to valuable legislation secured by the state federation of the State of Washington. The state organization was especially active during the recent session, and as a result succeeded in having passed the initiative and referendum, with percentages of ten and six; eight-hour law for women; employes' compensation act, differing for similar acts in that it creates a state insurance department, with a maximum death benefit of $4,000. Washington unionists are elated over their success.

The Southern Conference on Child and Women Labor will be held in Atlanta, Ga., April 25. This conference was endorsed by the Tennessee state federation of labor at its last session.

J. A. Cable, a union Cooper, and Grant S. Landrey, a union printer, of Kansas City, Kan., were both elected as city commissioners under the commission form of city government, the former being re-elected, he having been placed in that position at the inauguration of the commission form of government last year.

PRESIDENT TAFT OBDURATE

Chief Executive Still Inveighing Against Recall of Judges Provision in Arizona Constitution.

Washington, April 15.—The President is still vigorously opposing the section of the Arizona constitution which provides for the recall of judges. From statements emanating from the White House it is gleaned that he can reconcile himself to all other enact ents in the organic law of the new state save the one mentioned. But even though this at the present time seems to be an insurmountable objection to a ratification, yet the President may be unwilling to disapprove it solely because of the incorporation of this provision.

President Taft has held several conferences with Attorney General Wickersham and other members of the cabinet on this question. To Chairman Flood of the house committee on territories and Representative Houston of Tennessee he has outlined a scheme to eliminate the clause. The proposition was that the constitution pending before congress be adopted, and that later the people of Arizona, under the constitutional power, propose an amendment to the constitution permitting the recall to apply to all officers now mentioned except judges.

Prominent Arizonians now in Washington state that the people of the territory, while anxious to be granted statehood, would, if the recall of judges provision were again submitted to a vote, retain it by an overwhelming majority.

CEREAL MILL WORKERS.

Hereafter Charters will be Issued Direct From American Federation of Labor.

Washington, April 15.—In accordance with resolution #49 adopted at the St. Louis convention of the American Federation of Labor the International Union of Flour and Cereal Mill Employes has ceased to exist. All local unions which were formerly attached to the international will be furnished American Federation of Labor charters free of all cost. Central bodies, where these unions are affiliated, are urged to advise local unions to at once affiliate themselves direct.

"OVERLAPPING UNIONISM."

Jurisdictional Controversy Between Electricians and Tramway Workers in Sydney, Australia.

Washington, April 15.—"Overlapping" is the term used in foreign countries to designate what is termed here "jurisdiction". The Tramway Employes' union in Sydney has recently endeavored to make effective its claim to the work claimed by the Electrical Trade union, and a vigorous protest has been filed by the latter organization.

The Iron Molders of Akron, Ohio, have won a strike against the Wise Furnace Company and the Twentieth Century Company for an increase in wages.

FOR DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

Congressman Sulzer of New York Introduces Bill Creating New Department and Cabinet Officer.

Washington, April 15,—Congressman Sulzer has introduced his bill in the house, to create a department of Labor with the Secretary a cabinet member. The following excerpts from the bill gives a general idea of its character and scope:

"* * * That there is hereby created and established an executive department of government to be called the Department of Labor, with a secretary of Labor, who shall be the head thereof and a member of the cabinet, to be appointed by the president, by and with the advice and consent of the senate. * * *

"That there shall be in said department three assistant secretaries, to be appointed by the president, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, to-wit:

"A first secretary whose duty it shall be to supervise all matters relating to labor engaged in manufacturing and transportation industries.

"A second secretary whose duties shall be to supervise all matters relating to labor employed in mining and agricultural industries.

"A third secretary whose duties shall be to supervise all matters relating to labor engaged in building and the mercantile industries.

"That there shall be a branch of this department to be known as the bureau of fisheries, under the direction of a commissioner of fisheries, who shall have charge of all matters relating to labor engaged in the fishing industry.

"That the secretary of the department of labor shall have the power to appoint boards of arbitration and conciliation in labor disputes whenever in his judgment the interests of industrial peace may require it to be done." * * *

Numerous additional provisions are incorporated to facilitate the operation of the department.

OTHER LABOR ASSIGNMENTS.

All Members of the Labor Group Now Attached to the Various Committees of the House.

Washington, April 15...All members of the House of representatives who are members of labor organizations have committee assignments. In addition to the assignment already made public the following have just been made:

Cary of Wisconsin (Rep.)—Committee on Education, also on District of Columbia committee.

Farr of Pennsylvania (Rep.)—Committee on Education, also committee on claims.

Roberts of Nevada (Rep.)—Committee on Alcoholic Liquor Traffic, also committee on Irrigation of Arid Lands.

Berger of Wisconsin (Soc.)--Committee on District of Columbia.

RAILWAY PERSISTENCE

Another Attempt Being Made to Amend Important Section Oklahoma's Constitution.

Washington, April 15.— Last year the railways of the new State of Oklahoma initiated a petition to amend section 9, article 9, of the constitution. The initiated petition provided for the practical effacement of all foundation for railway legislation and the entire elimination of all legislation that had been enacted regarding contributory negligence, employers' liability and fellow servant abrogation. If the railways had been successful in substituting their amendment every statute then in force relating to public service corporations, together with all remedial labor legislation, would have become null and void.

The State Federation of Oklahoma, immediately upon the initiation of the petition, realizing the danger of the amendment, commenced an active campaign against it. The American Federation of Labor, also appreciating the value of this section to the working people of the state, materially assisted in presenting the claims of labor before the people. When the amendment came to a vote it was defeated by 50,000 majority.

But the railways, ever persistent, have again initiated a petition to amend the same section, and the election will be held April 25. There is some change in the present amendment, which expressly provides that certain sections shall be excepted, apparently an effort being made to cover the objections raised against the former amendment.

From the best obtainable information, however, there is a joker in the present amendment, and the safest way to dispose of it would be to again defeat it by a still larger majority than it was last year.

SEAMEN RESTIVE

Seamen for Redress of Grievances.

Washington, April 15.—The condition of the seamen has been extremely bad for many years, and as a result efforts have been made to complete a combination of the seamen from all parts of the world for the purpose of making a vigorous and effective protest against the wrongs they are suffering.

It is reported that seven great camps have already been selected for the accommodation of the seamen in the British Isles—London, Liverpool, Cardiff, Southampton, Shields, Glasgow and Hull. It is further stated that a large maintaining fund, equalling $5 from every union seaman, has been marshaled to defray the necessary expense. It is contemplated that suspension of work may occur some time in June.

San Antonio Structural Iron Workers have gained an increase of 50 cents per day over the wages paid last year.